

EMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND REFORMER
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bably from, Mendes, of his terrible position. Now
Gautier's
publisher was M. Georges Charpentier, who had
lately taken
over Ms father's business, and one evening
when they and
Francisque Sareey were together at the
Come'die Frangaise,
their conversation, during one of the *entr'actes*,
fell on the
young writers of the time. "There is one
among them,"
said Gautier,¹ "who is very unlucky, and who is
different
from most of the others. You should admit
him among
your authors, my dear Charpentier. If I am
not vastly
mistaken he possesses a touch of genius.
His name is
Emile Zola. Have you ever heard of him ?"

Yes, both Charpentier and Sareey had often
heard of Zola,
and had remarked his repeated efforts to get to
the front.
Nevertheless they were somewhat surprised by
the praise
which had fallen from Gautier's lips, fie,
subsequent to
this conversation, caused Zola to be informed of
the recom-
mendation he had given him, and the young
novelist soon
called on M. Charpentier, whose establishment
was then on
the Quai du Louvre. For just one moment
there had been
a little hesitation on Zola's part. His only suit
of clothes
was quite disreputable, and both he and his
devoted young
wife felt that he ought, at least, to appear
decently clad
before this publisher on whom his fate

depended. There
was very little money in the house, but
Madame Zola took
it and hurried to the "slop" market of the
Temple, where
she purchased a second-hand suit of black,
the nearest
approach to a fit that she could find. In those
slop garments— which, remind one of Daudet's black
trousers,
similarly acquired, which suddenly became a
military red,
having been very imperfectly dyed — Zola
presented himself

¹ M. Adolphe Brisson in "Le Temps," October 3,
1902.